



Statement on Immigration and Fair Practices

The Youngstown Area Jewish Federation has a deep respect for the United States and its democratic ideals. Our nation's strength lies in upholding the rule of law while advancing justice, human dignity, and the common good. When these principles are not fully balanced, the foundation of democracy can be tested.

As a Jewish organization, we are guided by enduring Jewish values that speak both to our particular heritage and to universal human responsibility: *b'tzelem Elohim*, *tzedek*, *rachamim*, and *tikkun olam*.

B'tzelem Elohim teaches that every person is created in the image of God, affirming the inherent dignity, worth, and sanctity of every human life. *Tzedek* calls upon us to pursue justice, fairness, and righteousness in the laws and institutions that shape society. *Rachamim* reminds us that compassion, empathy, and mercy must accompany judgment, especially toward those who are vulnerable or in distress. *Tikkun olam* expresses our shared obligation to help repair the world through acts of service, responsibility, and moral courage. Together, these values guide our responsibility to engage thoughtfully, ethically, and constructively in issues affecting our broader community.

We stand with our neighbors of all backgrounds and with leaders who support immigration practices that protect individuals and families while upholding the law. In standing with our neighbors, we affirm *b'tzelem Elohim*, recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of every person.

Secure borders, paired with orderly and efficient immigration processes, are essential to a healthy democracy, as is adherence to international commitments regarding refugees and asylum seekers. We believe those who qualify should have access to a fair and compassionate pathway to citizenship. This reflects *tzedek*, the pursuit of fairness and justice in our laws and institutions.

The United States is a nation of laws, and those laws must be respected and enforced. At the same time, they must also be just and equitable, reflecting the balance between law and *rachamim*, compassion for individuals and families facing hardship and uncertainty.